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LEGISLATIVE AUDIT DIVISION



Deputy Legislative Auditors:
Jim Pellegrini, Performance Audit
James Gillett, Financial-Compliance Audit

MEMORANDUM

TO: Legislative Audit Committee Members

FROM: Jim Pellegrini, Deputy Legislative Auditor, Performance Audits *JP*

DATE: May 14, 1999

RE: Implementation Status of Analysis of Game Warden Work Activities Audit

BACKGROUND

We issued our performance audit Analysis of Game Warden Work Activities (95P-04), in March 1996. We also provided a follow-up memorandum to the committee in December 1997. Normally, we complete follow-up audit work 12-18 months after issuing the original audit report. In this case, the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks suggested delaying the follow-up audit to allow for implementation of all audit recommendations. We completed follow-up audit work in January and determined the following status of the report's five recommendations:

IMPLEMENTATION STATUS

Prior Recommendation #1:

We recommend the department implement a resource-based enforcement workload planning and priority-setting process.

Department implementation activities for this recommendation include: performance-based budgeting, resource-based planning, and collection of management information. The department implemented performance-based budgeting for the Law Enforcement Division (LED) in July 1997, as required by statute.

Implementation of resource-based planning was initiated in a selected district within each region. Full implementation of the resource-based planning concept is tied to a department-wide effort to develop strategic plans and six-year resource plans.

The strategic plans are available and regional staff are preparing six-year plans. In 1996, LED revised the types of data collected from individual game wardens. With over two years of data now available, staff can more readily identify both warden activities and the amount of time dedicated to activities. Division staff indicated their intent to revise and update data collection to further improve the quality and usefulness of management information.

Present Recommendation Status:

Being Implemented.

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Prior Recommendation #2

We recommend the department:

- A. *Strengthen central office involvement in license fraud investigations.*
- B. *Establish formal procedures for license fraud investigations.*

The department hired staff in October 1997 to fill the part-time FTE position established by the 1997 Legislature. The position was approved by the legislature to help decrease the backlog of license fraud cases. According to wardens, they routinely receive candidate license fraud cases identified through screening accomplished by the division's license fraud investigator. In addition, draft procedures which provide criteria for establishing case priorities are available. LED staff are also developing a capability to track license fraud cases initiated in Helena and transferred to the appropriate region/warden.

Present Recommendation Status:
Implemented.

Prior Recommendation #3

We recommend the department restructure the ex-officio warden program to include specifying and monitoring of:

- *Types and qualifications of employees designated as ex-officio wardens.*
- *Level of enforcement activities.*
- *Level of training.*
- *Reporting structure.*
- *Policies and procedures.*

The department issued the Ex-Officio Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Policy manual in March 1997. Based on our discussions with staff, we found the number of ex-officios decreased and is now more controllable at the regional level. In addition, according to staff, training has increased and become more specialized to improve utilization of ex-officios.

Present Recommendation Status:
Implemented.

Prior Recommendation #4

We recommend the LED:

- A. *Establish policies and procedures regarding TipMont operations.*
- B. *Compile management information on program outcomes and impacts.*

The department hired staff in October 1997 to fill the part-time FTE position established by the 1997 Legislature. Staff developed draft procedures for determining the priority and processing of TipMont calls. Additionally, LED compiles TipMont information to track the number of calls, including the type of call (violation), region/warden assignment, and fish/wildlife species.

Present Recommendation Status:
Implemented.

Prior Recommendation #5

We recommend the LED:

- A. *Establish formal policies and procedures regarding citation controls.*
- B. *Re-establish their capability to generate automated reports regarding citation usage.*

According to LED staff, computer software problems were resolved and supervisors and wardens receive copies of citation reports. In addition, the department developed procedures and issued policy regarding handling of cash bonds.

Present Recommendation Status:

Implemented

CONCLUSION

Four of five recommendations are implemented. While Recommendation #1 (resource-based planning) is not fully implemented, the department identified steps for implementation. Recommendation #1 requires the participation of Fish, Wildlife and Parks Divisions as well as LED. As a result, full implementation is a long-term process. We do not recommend additional audit work at this time.

TC/m/p11.mem

cc: Pat Graham, Director, Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

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